

# Vaastu Shastra: Pseudo or Genuine? An Architect's Outlook

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**Abstract:** *Vaastu shastra is a conventional Indian system of Architecture, which conceived in India. As quoted by Dr. Havell (a famous historian), Vaastu Shastra was developed between a period of 6000 BCE to 3000 BCE, adding that Harappa and Mohen Jodaro nestles on the principles of Vaastu shastra. The current scenario ascertains that some architects consider it enigmatic and superstitious while counterpart suggests Vaastu shastra as flexible guidelines for space, sunlight, and function. Alike is the circumstance with inhabitants. Vaastu shastra, over centuries, have got neglected and hasn't received enough recognition which has even led to the state that Vastu shastra isn't involved in the curriculum of architecture course. The paper features the notion behind energies and directions entangled with Vastu shastra, the long lost significance of Vastu shastras. Uncovering the ambiguity if the Vastu shastras principle is related to eco-friendly building design. The paper also focusses on the actuality of the subject whether if Vastu affects dweller's life?*

**Keywords:** Vaastu shastra, energies, directions, eco-friendly building design

## 1. Introduction

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It would be unjust to conclude hastily. At the minute, it is paramount to perceive the scientific logic behind Vastu shastra. Commencing with the term "Vaastu Shastra", which means "Science of Architecture". The Sanskrit word "Vaastu" means dwelling or a plot of land. Term "Vaas" is to dwell, stay, or reside. "Shastra" can be translated as doctrine or teaching. Passing over the concept of Vastu Purush mandala- the mythology as it is the concept of one's belief, hence beginning with rationality. Vastu shastra is a science of energies, five elements of nature, and the directions.

## 2. The crux of Vastu Shastra

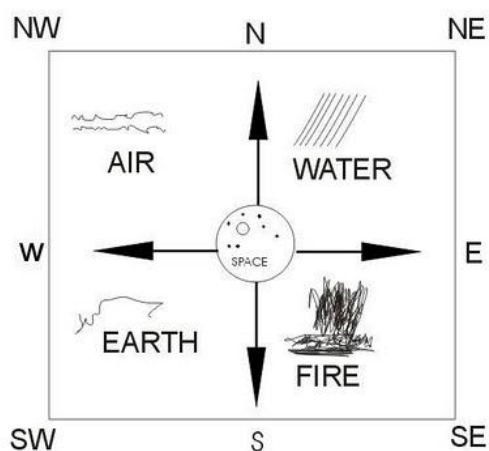
Cosmos is all-inclusive of energies. Energies encompass two forces- the five elements of nature and electromagnetic waves. Earth is the only planet amongst the nine planets where life exists. The only reasoning behind this is the existence of five elements- Water, Air, Fire, Earth, and Space. Our body is also inclusive of these five elements. Vastu combines all the five elements of nature called "Panchabhootas" and equalizes them. The balance or imbalance of the elements determines the conditions of an individual.

## 3. Five elements of nature

Water-Water is analogous with the conception of new ideas, thoughts, healing energy, and reconditioning of health. Water dominates the North-East direction in buildings. When water is in a balanced state in a building, it induces a spiritual and philosophical attitude to life.

- Air-Air constitutes growth and is linked with joy and happiness. Air influences the North-West direction. When air is in a balanced state, it gives birth to courage and perseverance.

- Fire- South-East is the direction of fire. When it is in a balanced state, it generates power, confidence, recognition, and money.
- Earth-Earth depicts stability. When it is in a balanced state, it creates stability and a sense of peace and harmony. South-West is the direction of earth.
- Space-Space commands the Central direction. When it is in a balanced state, it induces knowledge and awareness to understand new and creative ideas.



Picture 1: Vaastu and the five elements of nature

## 4. Interdependency of Energy and Vastu Shastra

As quoted by WHO (World Health organization)- "Electromagnetic fields are present in our environment but are invisible to the human eye. Electric fields are produced by the local build-up of electric charges in the atmosphere. The earth's magnetic field causes a compass needle to orient in a North-South direction". The electromagnetic field influences the human body. As per a study, few members of the public have reported a collection of symptoms to low levels of exposure to electromagnetic fields at home. Reported symptoms include headaches, anxiety, depression, nausea, fatigue though scientific evidence does not support a

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link between these symptoms and exposure to electromagnetic fields.



Picture 2: Electromagnetic waves around us

It is deduced that when a building is constructed on earth the equilibrium is disturbed as the physical structure generates a break in the electromagnetic field. Hence, it is crucial to reinstate this equilibrium. One of the main targets of Vastu shastra is to restore the balance between building and energy. When the energies flow harmoniously, they fabricate vibrations that positively affect inhabitants replenishing with peace and contentment.

Energies around can be manipulated with the aid of cardinal directions. Bestowing sun as the utmost important, energies in and around the structure can be modified.

5. Vastu and Cardinal Directions

As it is evident, that Vastu shastra demands certain placement of rooms in specific directions. It is of utmost importance to be aware of the logic behind this.

The universe is endless space and has no directions. On earth, humans consider directions to the sun. Every creature on Earth begins its activities at sunrise and takes a day off after sunset henceforth, Sun is paramount.

The main objective of Vaastu shastra principles of placing rooms in a specific direction is to ensure that inhabitants are unveiled to the rays of sunlight while performing different tasks of the day.

Analyzing the cardinal directions

North- East Direction - This direction is considered supreme, as the cosmic energy enters from this side. Sun's position is in this direction from 3 AM - 6 AM. Hence, this area is supposed to be left for temple space, meditation room, main entry, balcony or it can be left open.

East Direction- Sun's position is in this direction from 6 AM- 7.30 AM. Hence, the main door, living room, study room is preferred in this direction so that UV rays of morning light can enter the house.

Southeast Direction- Sun's position is in this direction from 7.30 AM- 9 AM. This direction is optimum for the kitchen. As this is the time for preparing food, sunlight can enter the kitchen and cosmic rays can bring positivity, peace in the house.

South direction- Sun's position in this direction is from 9 AM to noon. This direction is suitable for people to work, provision room, bedroom as these rays shall keep them active and can enhance concentration.

South West direction- Sun's position is in this direction from noon to 3 PM. This direction is optimum for the Master bedroom, wardrobes, dressing room as this is a resting period and space would enhance peace and calm in the specified direction.



Picture 3: Vastu and cardinal directions

West Direction- This is the time for the sun to set. West direction gets heated up more than any other direction. Hence, it is suggested to keep less habitable rooms on this side eg. bathrooms, storerooms, dining areas etc

North West Direction- This is the position where other rooms of the house can be placed eg. other bedrooms.

North Direction- This is the direction of the pole star, which is stagnant in the sky. Hence, this direction is considered to bring stability and security. Treasury, entrance can be in this direction.

Hence, the expression of the placement of rooms in specific directions is the utmost utilization of solar energy.

6. Is Vastu shastra beneficial in making buildings eco friendly?

Vastu shastra employs the interrelation between ecology, passive energy, and living beings. An Eco-house is an environmentally low-impact home designed, built with materials that reduce carbon footprint and lowers its energy needs. As already mentioned in the content above, Vaastu shastra principles make the utmost use of Sun and its solar energy, henceforth lowers the building's energy needs through mechanical devices. Quoting a few illustrations-

A courtyard in the middle of the building: A scene that is still common in rural India. This arrangement facilitates air and light from all sides. As an outcome, the energy and

vibrations in this kind of structure are at the peak and contribute to higher productivity/creativity amongst inhabitants. Vintage government offices and public utility buildings in cities like Mumbai are still the most comfortable for its inhabitants.

**Design of kitchen:** The South-East corner represents the fire element. The placement of a kitchen is optimum here. The Gas-stove should be placed in the South-East direction with a window on the East wall, and the cook is expected to face the East. The window here would aid in leading the way of positive universal energies of the East. It helps to maintain the physical and mental activeness of the cook.

Vaastu Shastra, the five basic elements ( Space, Air, Fire, Water, and Earth), the eight directions (North, North-East, East, South-East, South, South-West, West, North-West), the electromagnetic and gravitational forces of the Earth, the cosmic energy emerging from the atmosphere and its influence on human life are all taken into consideration in the science of Vaastu Shastra.

## 7. Conclusion

Through an architect's outlook, it can be concluded that Vaastu shastra entangle the concept of variants of energies. It would be inequitable to depend totally on it, as while designing a structure there are innumerable factors involved. Vaastu shastra being a facile approach for eco- friendly building concept, Vastu principles can be awarded some importance. Let Vaastu shastras not be passed over completely. Keeping in view, its logics and facts Vaastu shastra can be granted its long lost importance.

As far as, the debate of mutating the fate of inhabitants, through Vaastu shastras is concerned. With the aid of studies and occurrences, it can be said that destiny and hardwork are foremost. They hold sixty percent importance in altering a person's life. The rest twenty percent is karma (an individual's actions decide their fate in the future existence.) The last twenty percent can be awarded to Vaastu shastras. Vaastu shastras principles can modify one's life by synchronizing life with energies around. Major components of Vaastu principles for eg. the main entry, position of the master bedroom, placement of Kitchen etc.can be definitely taken into consideration. Incorporating a few Vaastu principles while building a new structure can definitely harmonize our life. Vastu Shastra may not be essential for living, but it is helpful for a better and healthier life. "One's environment helps in building a foundation for a healthier mind and body and Vastu Shastra offers ways to create a healthier life," says Nitin Parmar of VastuPlus. "If followed correctly, Vastu Shastra can help the home's residents to become physically and mentally healthy," Parmar adds.

## Author Profile



**Chinmayi saxena** is Architect, who is into academics since 5 years. Currently she is working as Assistant Professor in Bangalore. Her area of interests include- Architectural design, Landscape Design, Vaastu design etc.